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SESSIONAL PAPER No. 173/21

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In 1968, the first governing Council of HRRC assembled and addressed itself to the task of creating an organization to carry out the mandate specified in the founding legislation.

It was discovered that this new agency could not be patterned after any existing organization. The goal of HRRC proved to be much broader than that of any known research organization.

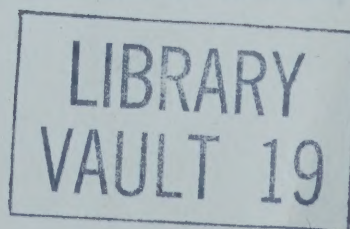
A small staff was recruited to serve initially, as a planning secretariat to Council -- to assist Council in deciding what its programs and priorities ought to be and how it ought to "tool-up" to meet its responsibilities.

By April of 1969, Council had initiated its first programs.

It was agreed that the organization should re-examine itself regularly; and that it should retain within itself the mechanisms for easy change and self-renewal.

Council's target was a fully-functioning research agency within five years -- by 1974. It had some intermediate targets as well: a clearly defined concept of its place in the research arena by 1970; some hard research pay-off by 1971; mechanisms for informing policy and practice by 1972; a comprehensive research, development, and policy thrust by 1973; and full maturity by 1974.

As has been indicated, HRRC attempts to monitor its progress. Each fall, as the next year's programs and budgetary requirements are planned, Council endeavours to assess what has been done and to create new approaches for moving to the next phase of development.



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Last fall, Council decided on the idea of an outside assessment. Council felt a review conducted by a team of persons would aid Council in its continuing task of monitoring the organization and charting its course for the future.

Dr. J. Forster of the Department of Sociology, University of Alberta, was asked to chair the Committee. Dr. Eric Hanson, also of the University of Alberta, and Mr. A. O'Brien, of the Treasury Department, Government of Alberta, became the other members of the team.

The report is now in.

Upon its receipt in January, the report was distributed to members of Council.

Subsequently, the coordinators and representatives of the staff met with Council for a joint analysis of the document.

Many of the observations and suggestions tended to confirm the views of Council and staff. These were accepted.

Other observations and suggestions proved to be new and useful.

Other observations and suggestions were not acted upon.

Still others were concluded untimely, in terms of HRRC's on-going plan of development; these were held in abeyance -- pending further consideration.

In summary some of the major observations and recommendations are:

1. It was suggested that HRRC has not yet dealt adequately with the function of "collecting, synthesizing, analysing, and interpreting available data." Council agreed. Indeed, before the Session, Council had begun to "tool-up" to correct this deficiency.

2. It was observed that HRRC has not yet dealt adequately with another of its functions: "the coordination of research efforts throughout the province." Council agreed. Steps have been taken -- to cooperate with other agencies in the interests of avoiding duplication of effort, of sharing results, and of developing comprehensive efforts.

3. It was pointed out that HRRC has not yet developed functional relationships with various policy-making groups such as Departments of Government and planning agencies. Now that relevant findings are beginning to come in, in quantity, we propose to move quickly to establish the relationships suggested.

4. Other observations, about the functioning of the organization itself, confirmed that theme areas, around which the agency has been structured, were becoming dysfunctional. Staff agrees. And so plans are underway to restructure the organization to facilitate a "systems approach" to research planning.

5. Finally, it has been pointed out that the in-house staff has not included a sufficiently broad array of talents.

The Director fully recognizes that this is so. Up to now, however, because Council have not wanted to develop the in-house staff prematurely, we have relied largely upon commissions and contracts with university scholars. Now it is proposed to change this situation, as recommended.

The Forster Committee report has provided Council with a useful input as Council attempts to plan the future development of HRRC.

December 28, 1970

Dr. T.C. Byrne,
Deputy Minister of Education.

Dear Dr. Byrne:

Attached please find a copy of a report submitted by the
Committee appointed October 2, 1970 to evaluate the Alberta
Human Resources Research Council.

J. Forster (Chairman)

E. Hanson

A. O'Brien

JF/jw



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Section I - Introduction

This committee was appointed in October 1970 to make an evaluation of the H.R.R.C. Within this brief time we did not undertake to examine every aspect of the H.R.R.C.; specifically no attempt was made to consider the quality or nature of individual research projects.

The committee has met regularly and has attempted to talk to as broad a range of persons as possible connected with the H.R.R.C. The cooperation of these people is appreciated.

There are two general observations to be made which are important.

1. The brief time available for this evaluation means clearly that it cannot be considered definitive - it must be seen as a quick overview, and its recommendations as suggestions.
2. The H.R.R.C. is a new organisation and several aspects of its activities cannot yet be evaluated. On the other hand this is probably an excellent time to discuss the general orientation of the H.R.R.C. and it is to this that the report is primarily directed.

Section II - The H.R.R.C. Mandate

The act to establish the H.R.R.C. in March 30, 1967 sets out in Section 3 the objectives which were intended.

"3. The objects of the Council are to undertake educational, social, economic and other research relating to and affecting the development and conservation of human resources in Alberta and, in particular but without affecting the generality of the foregoing,

- (a) to facilitate and assist all efforts throughout Alberta, to gather, analyze, co-ordinate and distribute available knowledge and to undertake such efforts directly whenever it deems it necessary to fill gaps in educational, social, economic and other related research or to supplement and assist the work of existing bodies,
- (b) to develop, revise and assess plans, materials and procedures relating to or affecting educational, social, economic and other aspects of human resources development, and to disseminate the results of and assist in the implementation of the findings of such developments, revisions and assessments,
- (c) to encourage and facilitate the training of persons engaged in educational, social, economic and other related research,
- (d) to establish directly or to assist in the establishment of developmental studies in the field of education, and
- (e) to aid an understanding among administrators, practitioners and the general public of educational, social, economic and other related problems and needs in Alberta."

It is obvious that this set of objectives needed to be clarified in the workings of the H.R.R.C.

It is our understanding that the establishment of the H.R.R.C. grew out of the White Paper on Human Resource Development in the

Province, and that a great deal of the enthusiasm for the establishment of an organisation arose from the interest of professional educators. It is clear that these two basic sources of support gave a strong direction to the character of the organisation as it exists at the moment.

These two influences also served to give direction to the interpretations of the initial Act. We have the impression that the way in which the Act has been interpreted is rather narrow. Section A above suggests that the H.R.R.C. should be involved in the process of gathering, analysing, coordinating and distributing knowledge wherever it is necessary to fill gaps in educational, social and economic or other related knowledge. This broad injunction has not been taken as literally as perhaps it should have been. For example the relationship between the H.R.R.C. and other agencies seems, from our enquiries, to be limited and certainly does not place the H.R.R.C. in the central position of analysing and coordinating relevant knowledge in the Province.

Similarly with paragraph B in which it would appear one of the most significant words is that of "dissemination". It may of course be a function of the early phase in which we have been asked to review the H.R.R.C., but, it would appear again that the organisation has not undertaken dissemination of knowledge, in the broad sense of the term intended, as one of its major functions. It is true that the H.R.R.C. has a variety of publications, but if the essence of this paragraph was that the H.R.R.C. should be active in the public arena to disseminate the results and assist in the implementation of research findings in the Province then it would seem the H.R.R.C. has construed its objectives narrowly.

Section C on the other hand would appear, at this time, a central concern of the existing organisation. The same would apply to the following section; "To establish directly or to assist in the establishment of studies in the field of education", something which has indeed been undertaken.

Section E has already been commented on by indirection. That is, the increase of understanding among administrators, practitioners and the general public of the needs of Alberta. This is obviously the question of dissemination referred to above, and will be referred to later in the report.

In essence, it would appear to us, that the H.R.R.C. has taken as its major contribution the conduct of research, and the training of persons in the Province. While we fully recognise that the H.R.R.C. cannot do everything asked of it in the Act, and certainly not within two years of its creation, we are nevertheless concerned to bring to your attention the broader implications of the initial objectives.

This brings us specifically to three points which we would like to draw out of the preceding remarks.

1. We are concerned that the H.R.R.C. as an organisation has not made greater progress in relating itself to other organisations in this Province, governmental and otherwise, which are engaged either in research or in activities closely related to the question of social and economic development. We feel that the H.R.R.C. should make greater efforts in this direction to improve the coordination of activities within the Province.

2. We feel that, in whatever ways are available to it, the H.R.R.C. should undertake a more broadly based programme of public involvement with a two fold purpose. On the one hand to disseminate to the community at large a greater awareness of the social and economic problems and questions of development which exist within the Province. On the other, to acquaint itself more forcibly with the nature of feelings, attitudes, and beliefs, that exist towards the questions which lie behind the existence of the organisation.
3. We feel that in its initial intent the H.R.R.C. was not to be exclusively a research organisation. At the moment we see it becoming such and it follows from what we have said that in our view this is not entirely desirable. We realise that it has been an excellent basis on which to establish the organisation in its earliest months of existence but at this time we feel attention should be paid to broadening its endeavours.

Section III - H.R.R.C. External Affairs

a. Relations with the Government

The involvement of the H.R.R.C. with the Government of the Province is very close both through initial intent and through membership on the council of the H.R.R.C. While the committee does not see this as a necessary handicap, either to the Government or to the H.R.R.C., it is conscious of the fact that this creates a relationship for the H.R.R.C. which is essentially problematic.

One way of seeing this problem is in the distinction between policy as practiced by the government, and research as undertaken by the H.R.R.C. The question, of the translation of policy into research, and the problem, of transmitting research information to the government to enable it to make a policy, is extremely difficult.

This Committee is impressed with the problem but has no immediate suggestion to offer except that the H.R.R.C. must make sure that the research which is completed is available to the government in a form that is appropriate. On the other hand the government through the Council of the H.R.R.C. has a considerable responsibility to see that the issues which are at stake in the Province are translated into meaningful research for the H.R.R.C. Such a suggestion will never overcome the basic contradiction in expectations between policy and research, but nevertheless it is important that the channels be as open as possible.

It is equally important that the H.R.R.C. be not seen by the government as simply another government agency which receives

specific instructions and carries them out on request. This perspective is one that would be quite destructive to the H.R.R.C. There must be room left for independent concerns on the part of the H.R.R.C. to foresee and predict areas of potential concern to both government and public. Only constant and effective communication can achieve this.

We feel that this problem has not yet manifested itself as clearly as it will in the future. At present the amount of completed research ready for transmission to the government and the community is still relatively small. As this research increases problems of relations with government will become more severe and attention must be paid to them beforehand.

Summary

Relations between H.R.R.C. and government are still being worked out in practice. There are therefore few definitive statements which can be made. The following points however do seem to be significant.

1. That both government and the H.R.R.C. remain very sensitive to maintaining an effective relationship. The precise form of this will presumably depend on a great many factors which emerge over time.
2. However, the director of the H.R.R.C. must make it a serious responsibility to be well informed across

this potential communication gap. The relationship between his organisation, the council and the government should be one of his central concerns.

3. While we see a fairly close connection between the policies of the government and the activities of the H.R.R.C. it is important that the organisation be left sufficient flexibility that it can be innovative both in its research, and in its suggestions for research. This would again have reference to the relationship between the H.R.R.C. and other government agencies in the Province.
4. The obvious way of achieving a degree of flexibility is of course through finding other sources of finance than the direct grant from the government. Such a possibility was clearly envisioned in the initial Act of establishment. Again we feel that the H.R.R.C. through its director should be active in attempting to obtain additional sources of funding.
5. It is strongly believed by this committee that social and management science should have an in-put into all phases and all types of research. On the other hand research conducted in isolation, whether physical or social science, frequently becomes trivial.

At the present time there are several research agencies in the Province whose work may from time to time overlap. To make the findings of these agencies effective a central

coordinating and interperative agency is necessary to translate these findings into Policy. In our view this should be the H.R.R.C.

b. Relations with the Universities

Through the direction that the H.R.R.C. has chosen to take, with a heavy commitment to research undertaken on a contract basis rather than within the organisation, the H.R.R.C. has come to have a close relationship with the universities.

This relationship has no consequences at the moment which are disadvantageous to either the university or the H.R.R.C., but nevertheless the closeness of this connection is something which should be watched with care over the next few years.

To some extent the H.R.R.C. has become a significant source of research funds for social sciences in Alberta Universities. Given the desire for high quality work the use of monies in this way makes good sense, but it is our view that the H.R.R.C. should not close off to the prospect of finding good researchers outside the university community.

Further through its commitment to a set of themes the H.R.R.C. has put itself in the position of dictating the direction of a great deal of the research undertaken in the Province. This may not be a serious hazard provided that the themes are flexible and are not in some manner points of rigidity in the organisation and therefore in the research conducted.

In the course of our conversations with numerous people two aspects of this H.R.R.C. research funding have become evident. One of the latent effects of the H.R.R.C. has been that through making research funds available it has given some people a rapid introduction to Alberta, and developed a degree of commitment to the Province which might under other circumstances have taken a considerable time to develop. However the H.R.R.C. might well play a more positive role in assisting researchers to find alternative funding.

A further aspect of this approach is that through its interest in research and researchers in this Province the H.R.R.C. runs the risk of becoming somewhat parochial. In any kind of research, whether in urbanization, or social and economic development, or education, there must be a sophisticated awareness of international trends. This is necessary if the Province is not to waste resources on conducting research and development programmes which have already been implemented and examined elsewhere. There is a great deal to be gained, from time to time, in utilising highly skilled and specialised researchers even though they may not be resident of this Province.

Summary

On this topic there are no specific recommendations we can make but we would caution the H.R.R.C. to be aware of the implications inherent in this increasingly close connection with the universities. We would point out that the H.R.R.C. must enhance its credibility with the government, with the universities, and with the community at large, and must avoid too great an involvement with any one.

Section IV - Internal Affairs of H.R.R.C.

a. Budget

A. Budget Procedures

The Council submits a budget request annually to the Provincial Treasurer in accordance with requirements of the Financial Administration Act. This budget covers only those areas of activity funded through the provincial government appropriation, and does not include expenditures financed through trust funds, or the "conference account". The budget is presented in "line-item" terms, i.e., salaries, fees and commissions, travel, etc., rather than programme terms. Supplementary information regarding the amounts required for various research programmes is provided, but budget allocations are not directly related to these programmes.

B. Administrative Procedures

Administrative and personnel policies are established through by-laws approved by the Council. In the case of clerical employees conditions of service are identical to those which apply to the Provincial Public Service. In the case of Research Officers and Research Assistants, however, conditions of service have been established independently. These provide for one month's annual vacation rather than three weeks; for one month's sick leave or for sick leave in excess of one month at the discretion of the Direction; and for attendance at two conferences per annum. Salary levels are established

by the Council on the recommendation of the "Salary and Staff Benefits Advisory Committee" comprised of two members of Council, two members recommended by the staff, and two members added by the four other members. At the present time clerical salaries are established in accordance with levels of pay in the Provincial Public Service. Research Assistants are paid in a range from \$6,050 to \$14,350 per annum, and Research Officers are paid in a range from \$11,100 to \$24,650 per annum.

We feel that unless clear criteria of classification are established the present range for Research Assistants and Officers is too wide.

Comments on Present Procedures

The budgetary procedures being followed presently give rise to certain difficulties. In particular the fact that the provision of funds is tied to the provincial fiscal year presents problems in planning a research program which may extend over a number of years and which involves other organizations, particularly Universities. These factors make it difficult for the Council to anticipate cash flows precisely. Another disadvantage of the present procedure is that it results in some delay in processing payments. The chief advantages of the present procedures are that they free the Council from the necessity of establishing detailed administrative and accounting procedures for the receipt and disbursement of funds, and that they provide a means by which the government can be assured that

public funds are being disbursed in accordance with legislative requirements.

The format of the Council's budget also deserves comment. The presentation of the budget in line item terms is not appropriate in view of the fact that most of the Council's research is undertaken by outside agencies. The bulk of the Council's budget therefore appears simply as "fees and commissions", without giving any indication of the nature of the research programmes for which funds are requested. Thus the present budget does not contribute to an improved understanding of the Council's programmes on the part of provincial legislators and the provincial government.

The administrative procedures which have been established by the Council raise a number of concerns. In general they give more discretion to the Director of the Council than is normal in public enterprises. This discretion is, however, desirable given the nature of the Council's responsibilities, and the fact that Council does not meet on a regular basis. Administrative by-laws differ from those which apply in the Public Service, in several respects. In the case of conditions of service for senior employees, differences in conditions of service from those applying in the Public Service are undoubtedly necessary given the need to attract senior research personnel. As these individuals are likely to come from the academic community, it is necessary for conditions of service to be similar to those which apply to academic staff. However, there is no apparent direct relation between conditions of service which apply in the Council, and those common

to Alberta Universities. It might well be desirable to develop an explicit relationship to conditions in these Universities, particularly in the area of salary levels and fringe benefits.

In the case of junior officers, the need to establish conditions of service comparable to those of university personnel seems less obvious. One might well argue that these personnel perform functions not significantly different from those of research personnel in the Public Service, and that it would be appropriate, given the fact that the Council is a Crown agency, for conditions of service to be comparable to those in the Public Service.

The differences between travel allowances provided by the Council and those provided in the Public Service do not appear to be essential to the maintenance of the integrity and objectivity of the Council's research programme. There seems little justification for such differences, again, given the fact that the Council is a public agency. Such differences create unnecessary friction between the Council and the Government, and inhibit the development of confidence in the Council's administration of its affairs on the part of government.

Alternative Procedures

Several alternatives to present funding and budgetary procedures could be considered. Firstly, the Council could be clearly recognized as an independent Crown Corporation with public funds provided to the corporation in the form of grants. The Council would then become solely responsible for the management and disbursement of these funds. A

second alternative would be to fund the Council by means of grants administered under a separate fund, but with the Provincial Government providing administrative and financial advice and/or direct assistance to the Council. The chief advantage of funding the Council by means of grants would be the increased flexibility which the Council would be afforded in planning its programmes and the reduction of administrative delays in the disbursement of funds. The chief disadvantages would be the increased administrative burden which this procedure would place on the Council's staff and the reduced legislative control over the disbursement of public funds which would result. The significance of the latter point is, to some extent, dependent on one's interpretation of the Council's mandate; specifically, does the Council form a part of the executive arm of the provincial government, or is it a totally independent body which should not be subject to legislative direction of any kind?

Another alternative would be to provide all funding of the Council through a provincial appropriation, with all revenues from outside sources being placed in the General Revenue Fund. This procedure would have the advantage of providing complete financial information regarding the Council's activities to the Legislature, and of subjecting all programmes of the Council to review during the budget process. It might be argued, however, that this procedure would discourage contributions from outside sources for support of the Council's activities, and that it would unduly inhibit the Council's flexibility and autonomy in planning its research programme.

The basic question which must be considered in developing budgetary and administrative procedures appropriate to the Council's activities is the degree to which Council programmes and activities should be subjected to governmental and legislative review. This question is common to a number of problems discussed in this report, and has been commented on elsewhere. It would seem clear, however, that if the Council is to fulfill its objective of informing and affecting the development of social policy within the Province, it must be sensitive to the concerns of policy-makers, and must develop confidence in its work among policy-makers. Whether this requires that its programmes and activities be subject to direct governmental review through the budget process is a matter of judgement. Certainly the budget process provides some means for achieving these objectives. However, the fact that members of the Executive Council are directly represented on the Human Resources Research Council may adequately serve these requirements.

Possible Recommendations

1. That provincial funding of the "in-house" expenditures of the Council be provided in the current manner, but that funds provided for commissioned research be placed in a trust fund on a quarterly basis, (administered through the General Trust Fund similarly to present trust funds of the Council), to facilitate the planning and administration of commissioned research projects.

2. That the budget submitted to the government show expenditures by programme areas, utilizing 'job codes' for each of the programmes, and that expenditures be allocated to job codes as they are incurred. This procedure would provide a more meaningful basis for the determination of provincial funding of the Council's programmes than is provided by a line-item budget. (The latter should also be provided as supplementary information.) Adoption of job codes would provide the council with current information on the financial status of programmes on a regular basis, and should facilitate the monitoring of these programmes. It might be mentioned that this procedure has been adopted by the Research Council of Alberta.
3. That the Council consider the desirability of establishing explicit guidelines for determination of levels of remuneration of senior research officers relative to those of academic staff in Alberta Universities. (This need not imply that salary levels be identical to those of academic personnel. Such guidelines might well recognize the opportunities available to academic staff for earnings from private consulting, for personal research during summer months, etc.)
4. That conditions of service for junior research officers be made comparable to those obtaining in the Public Service.
5. That one member of the "Salary and Staff Benefits Committee" be appointed on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner.
6. That travel and subsistence allowances be established in accordance with those prevailing in the Public Service, or in the Universities.

b. Organisational Affairs of the H.R.R.C.

In defining its activities and purpose the H.R.R.C. has debated the question of whether research should be done within the organisation or outside the organisation. At the moment we have the impression that there is some imbalance between these two activities. It is clear that a great deal of effort has gone into research outside the organisation. If this is the direction to be taken then it would seem that the internal organisation is probably on the one hand too big, and on the other hand not perhaps sufficiently skilled to provide the technical services needed by researchers. We are aware of the amount of discussion that has gone into this question but we feel that it is a matter on which the council must spend time in order to provide clearer direction for the organisation. It is the view of this Committee that the H.R.R.C. can best fulfil its purpose by having a small but highly skilled in-house operation which can serve those doing research and at the same time undertake effective co-ordination and dissemination of results. We would also point out in this connection that such an alternative is probably cheaper than the maintenance of a large in-house operation.

There has been debate over the question of flexibility versus continuity in the organisation. At one point it was suggested to us that turnover of personnel in the H.R.R.C. was in itself perhaps a measure of either flexibility or possibly organisational weakness. The Committee is not impressed with this argument. In the early stages of any organisation there is bound to be turnover of personnel and, relatively speaking, the H.R.R.C.'s experience here has been modest.

However, the question of flexibility and rigidity remains as an issue of importance for the future of the organisation. It is our view that both are desirable, and the question is at what levels within the organisation each is to be maintained. Clearly the advantage of a permanent long-term secretariat to conduct the continuing activities of the organisation and provide a continuing sense of direction is very important. On the other hand it would appear critical that at a level below the director and his immediate assistants there should be considerable flexibility in style, purpose and intent. We return here to an earlier topic, that of the "themes" established by the organisation. We would point out that once the themes were identified and persons selected to run these various programmes not only were the themes themselves pursued but they were pursued with a particular style and mode of operation. At this level in the organisation it is our opinion that there should be considerable flexibility. We would recommend either that themes as currently expressed by the H.R.R.C., be constantly revised and reviewed, and/or that the directors of various programmes be moved from one programme area, that is theme, to another. We are impressed with the differences among these programmes and feel it important that the varying approaches of style, content and method be brought to bear on all of the thematic areas currently subject to research.

In addition it seems clear that at the junior level within the organisation there will always be a relatively high level of turnover. This does not seem in any sense unfortunate and indeed there are good arguments for proposing that the contracts of junior people

should be for two years. In this way the career possibilities of young people will be protected, and at the same time there can be a fairly constant injection of new ideas and approaches. A point of particular note to the Committee is the need to introduce into the H.R.R.C. young social scientists trained in disciplines other than education. A final point on this subject is that the number of research assistants employed by the H.R.R.C. seems to us to be somewhat excessive and we were unable to obtain satisfactory justification for their continuing employment. It is our feeling that unless persons at this level have some particular skill, the number of such appointments should probably be reduced.

There are a set of problems related to the nature of the various programmes currently undertaken. One of the first of these is the fact that the H.R.R.C. should not be in the position of making judgements about the outcome of research or policy. We gained the impression that in some areas the H.R.R.C. had in a sense made a commitment to an outcome. This is perhaps best explained in terms of the notion of "missions" which is most significant in the area of education. To us the concept of "mission", and its commitment to an end, seems an unwise analogy. Mission research, which might have the objective of getting to the Moon has established a priority which thereby should be met, perhaps at any cost. This type of early commitment which is seen for example in the commitment of education to affective rather than cognitive learning seems to us to be unwise at this time. We are not aware of research in the Province of Alberta which makes such a commitment appropriate, although we are quite conscious of the

theoretical arguments which have been developed to favour one over the other.

Further the various programmes which have been established are in danger of becoming disciplinary in nature. This would we feel be unfortunate. The identification of one particular programme with educationalists, another with psychologists, etc. would have a most rigidifying influence. At the moment there appears to us to be an overlap between the research conducted in these various programmes which is often not meaningful in light of the needs of the Province. For this reason we would prefer that the thematic areas either be broken down or become much more flexible, or be redirected into other channels which would provide for greater input from a variety of points of view.

Finally the manner in which the programmes are presently conducted leads in our opinion to inadequate communication between them. It is our feeling that there should be far greater interplay not only at the level of research, but particularly at the level of interpretation of research.

The question of research interpretation returns to the earlier suggestions which we have made that dissemination of knowledge is as much a part of the H.R.R.C. activity as the conduct of research. We are not aware at this time of an effective mechanism within the organisation for bringing together diverse results from the various programmes and research projects, for integrating these in some meaningful way, and disseminating the information in some form which is not purely academic. We say this realising full well that it is somewhat early in the organisation's history for this to be a serious issue.

However, it is obvious that this problem will increase in magnitude and very serious attention must be given to integration and dissemination at the level we have described.

While we stated at the beginning that we did not intend to comment on specific projects there are certain observations of a general nature which appear relevant. The most significant of these is that some members of this Committee were disturbed by the lack of specificity in some of the projects. It does not appear to us that there are very good grounds for the conduct of speculative work by the H.R.R.C. This is the type of work which could well be done within the present conditions of universities. In the allocation of scarce resources for research it is our belief that there must be some fairly direct payoff for the Province. We recognise that any such work must be predicated upon prior theoretical and/or speculative work but we believe this can be done elsewhere than in the H.R.R.C.

We are suggesting that there is at the moment a potentially difficult problem of feeding back into the organisation information derived from particular research projects, and there is a serious need to integrate the various research projects at a level beyond that of the programme areas. We say this on the understanding that dissemination of information for general policy purposes and community purposes is a major consideration. This problem is combined with a difficulty of policy interpretation from level to level within the H.R.R.C. Specifically from the Government to the Council, from the Council to the director, from the director to the programme co-ordinators, and from the co-ordinators to individual researchers. These forms of communication we feel should be facilitated as far as

possible.

This leaves one major point, namely that there should be more effective communication between the H.R.R.C. and related organisations whether government or community in the Province. In this connection the Committee feels that the Council of the H.R.R.C. has not functioned to give as much direction as it should to the director and to the officers who must carry out the policy.

Effectiveness of the Council in Society

The director and his associates should have a keen awareness of the technological, economic, and social trends which are at work in the Alberta society. There should be an effective interchange of ideas with respect to human resource development between members of the staff of the Human Resources Research Council and members of all governments, institutions, and groups in the society which have an interest in human resource development.

It would be desirable to set up a large advisory committee, with representatives drawn from the provincial government, the federal government, city and local governments, business associations, agricultural associations, professional associations, labour unions, student organisations, Indian organisations, and individuals from various groups, with an interest in human resource development. This committee should be a forum to which research reports are brought and discussed. The committee should serve as a feedback mechanism in every way, reacting critically to research results and policy proposals,

and disseminating new findings. It should be an agency through which the Human Resources Research Council can make its research findings socially effective.

It would be desirable for the director and his associates to make contacts with outside groups and individuals on an informal basis to begin with. In this way, the director and associates will find out which individuals within specific groups and organisations have genuine human resource development interests, capacities, and needs.

Finally, in order to promote effective and relevant research programs, a small executive committee might be set up, consisting of professional and technical personnel drawn from the various groups, by some system of election or appointment. This committee would meet frequently with the director and his associates. There should be a member from the Human Resource Development Authority on this committee, as well as from other organisations engaged in human resource development, in order to secure co-ordination of research.

Summary

Overall the Committee has not found any major issues which are of immediate concern to the conduct of H.R.R.C. affairs. On the other hand given the short life of the organisation we are more interested in the potential areas of difficulty. Among these we would have recommendations on the following points.

1. That the H.R.R.C. develop its activities primarily on the basis of contract research, and use its in-house facilities for the provision of highly technical personnel who serve to

facilitate the activities of contract researchers.

2. That the H.R.R.C. find ways of providing greater flexibility in its themes and programmes of research both in their content and their style of proceeding. That the organisation improve its means of co-ordinating and integrating various research projects and research programmes with an end to disseminating this information to the public and to the government.
4. That the H.R.R.C. maintain as much flexibility as possible in its responsiveness to provincial needs.
5. That the H.R.R.C. find ways of working more effectively with the other agencies of the Province engaged in similar kinds of activities.
6. Finally, the Committee wishes to recommend that the Council appoint a small steering committee, (or executive committee) to work directly with the Director. This small committee should be composed of persons from outside the Council and be appointed on the basis of technical and/or professional qualifications. (E.g., possible members could be Research Directors for other Provincial agencies.)

Summary of Major Recommendations

This summary does not list all suggestions made in the report but attempts to convey their general tenor and direction.

1. The H.R.R.C. should devote more attention to its potential co-ordinating role among the various provincial research agencies.
2. Public involvement and responsiveness to Provincial needs and the dissemination of information should be encouraged, possibly through the broad representative committee recommended in the report.
3. Relations with government should be a central and continuing concern of the Director.
4. Additional sources of funding should be explored.
5. The Council should consider appointing a small steering committee of outside persons to work with the Director.
6. The future development of the H.R.R.C. should be through contract research with a small, highly technical, in-house operation.
7. Flexibility of research programmes together with co-ordination and dissemination of their results should be seen as imperative.
8. Provincial funding of in-house research should continue as at present, but commissioned research funds might be placed in trust funds on a quarterly basis.

9. Budget submissions should show expenditures by programme areas, rather than the present line budget.
10. The council should establish guidelines for remuneration and service conditions for personnel which are consistent with either the Public service or the Universities of Alberta.

